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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

KENTUCKY HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

AT ITS

SECOND ANNUAL MEETING,

IN FRANKFORT, FEBRUARY 11, 1880.

[From Kentucky Yeoman Report.]

The Kentucky Historical Society held its Second Annual Meeting in Major Hall, Frankfort, at 8 o'clock, P. M., on Wednesday, February 11, 1880. Owing to the inclement weather and hard rain prevailing, the attendance was not as large as it would otherwise have been, but those present constituted a highly intelligent and appreciative audience. The platform was occupied by the officers of the Society, the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House, Ex-Governor BISHOP, of Ohio; Hon. I. N. BOONE, Representative from Clark county, a relative of DANIEL BOONE, and other distinguished citizens.

The proceedings were opened with an appropriate prayer by Rev. GREEN CLAY SMITH, followed by an introductory address by Ex-Governor JAMES B. MCCREARY, President of the Society.

Upon its conclusion he announced that, owing to the unavoidable absence of Col. WM. PRESTON JOHNSTON, the orator of the evening, his address would be read by Maj. H. T. STANTON, whom he introduced to the audience, and who executed the duty assigned him with credit to himself and the author, whose absence, however, was much regretted.

The next exercise on the programme was the reading of a memorial to the Legislature by Gen. C. M. CLAY, Chairman of the Memorial Committee, who followed the same with a few remarks. Succeeding this, Prof. G. W. KANCK, Curator of the Society, made a verbal report of the progress of the Society during the past year, with a stirring appeal in its behalf. The enrollment of the new members followed, and the proceedings were closed with benediction by Prof. J. D. PICKETT. We give, in the order of the programme, the several addresses of the evening:

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY JAMES B. MCCREARY, PRESIDENT.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: The lessons of History cannot be too highly appreciated, or too thoroughly examined. Whether we study them as presented on the Temples and Tombs of ancient times, or in the vellum volumes of the present, much benefit may be derived. Lord Bacon said: "As statues and pictures are dumb Histories, so Histories are speaking pictures."

Everything that preserves the Past of an Empire, a Republic, or a State, is valuable. The thread of events that joins the ages together, or the channel by which their special contributions have been handed down from Asia to Europe, and from Europe to America, are full of thrilling interest. The dawn of civilization in the East,

and its march through successive oriental Empires; the advancement of ancient polity, science, art, and literature; the struggle for personal liberty and independence, and the changes which occurred when the sunshine of Christianity first illumined the world, are not only speaking pictures of History, but are indicative also of the ultimate accomplishment by the human race of the grand destiny ordained by Divine Providence.

A great philologist said: "History is a narration of events—a statement of the progress of a nation." If this is true, there is no country on earth whose teachings are more instructive or more worthy of preservation than ours. In this age of invention, improvement, and advancement the changes produced by investigation and discovery are so vast and rapid that it is difficult to realize their magnitude, or comprehend the transformations that are occurring around us. According to the beautiful representations of Bancroft, we are "setting up the grand temple of civilization, the separate stones and pillars of which each nation and age was commissioned to hew and carve." Our people have built according to their genius and instincts. Time and thought and experience have not wrought in vain, and they realize that "they have builded better than they knew." In fact, when we consider their inventions and their workmanship, and remember that the American Union, though but little more than a century old, is about equal in territory to the whole of Europe; has fifty millions of human beings, and connects two oceans; has eighty thousand miles of railroads, and the same number of miles of telegraph; enrolled last year in the public schools nine millions of pupils, for whose education an army of over two hundred thousand teachers were employed, and about eighty millions of dollars expended by the States; has annual productions of wheat, corn, cotton, and other staples that are sought after in almost every market of the civilized world; has underlying her soil vast store-houses of coal, iron, gold, and silver, not surpassed by any other section of the globe, and has added to all these freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom of religion, and universal freedom of person, it seems as if our Republic was indeed reserved as the proper location for the grandest structure of civilization, and that the human mind cannot assign a limit to its growth, or anticipate the crowning events of the coming century, if, under wise laws, proper economy, and correct statesmanship, its prosperity is not retarded. Everything connected with the History of the United States is worth preserving and perpetuating. Kentucky is a component part of our great Republic, and her sons should perform their share toward rescuing from oblivion and preserving all that is valuable.

We owe it to our ancestors, to ourselves, and our posterity, to preserve and perpetuate, in a durable form, the official and public acts of those who preceded us, with the same care and attention given to the public and official acts of those now in authority. While much that is valuable connected with the History of our State has been collected and preserved by the able and indefatigable efforts of Marshall, Butler, and the senior and junior Collins, and by other Kentucky Historians, it is a matter of regret that the archives of our State do not contain every important document in relation to the early conventions and other political events anterior to the separation of Kentucky from Virginia, and her admission into the Union. I may add, also, that it is by no means creditable to our State that many of the old and valuable records and journals have been lying for years unhonored, unappreciated, and uncared for, in undistinguishable confusion, in a room rarely opened, the prey of moths, cobwebs, and the dust of decay. The absence of proper legislation authorizing them to be properly arranged and cared for is the cause of their present condition.

Twenty-two States of this Union have Historical Societies, which have collected much that is valuable, and contributed much that has added to their power and eminence. Some of these State Historical Societies are supported entirely by State aid, and many of the best men of the country belong to them. There is no State whose history is richer in material of every kind, or fuller of thrilling interest, than the State of Kentucky. The lives of such men as Daniel Boone, the early pioneer; Isaac Shelby, the first Governor of Kentucky; John Brown and John Edwards, the first Senators; Christopher Greenup, the first Representative in Congress from Kentucky; Harry Innis, Benjamin Sebastian, Caleb Wallace and Thos. Todd, the first Judges of the Court of Appeals, help to make up the History of our State, give to it prominence, and serve as guide-posts to mark distinct periods of progress; but the History of Kentucky is not confined to them; the evidences of a pre-historic race that preceded the rude and untutored tribes encountered here by the early Anglo-Saxon explorers; the events connected with the days when Kentucky was the pioneer of civilization, and the first Territory that appeared for admission into the Union; the relics of the times which gave to her the name of "The Dark and Bloody Ground;" the utterances of her statesmen; the doings

of her soldiers; the history of her bench and bar and pulpit, glittering with the wisdom of men who might properly be called the peers of any who have ever lived within the borders of our Republic; the contributions of her sons and daughters to science, literature, and art, and her wonderful geological formations, all serve to make the work of the Kentucky Historical Society charming and comprehensive, and indicate that if it is properly supported by its members, and aided by the State, it will become equal in importance and magnitude to any in the Union.

We meet to-night to celebrate the Second Anniversary of the Kentucky Historical Society. I am gratified to be able to state that it is in a prosperous condition, and that its future seems bright and promising.

The object of the Society is to not only hold in trust for the State, and arrange, under proper authority, all records or papers that may be committed to its care, but also to collect or receive as contributions everything of interest or of value connected with the History of our State; and also to form an association of Kentuckians, who, loving everything connected with Kentucky, desire also to keep step with the music of an age of progress, improvement, and advancement. Surely there can be no more laudable undertaking than this, and the aid of every friend of the Commonwealth is invoked. There is no State more worthy of the affection of her sons and daughters than ours. The traveler, amid the sunny scenes of Italy, or France, or the lowlands of Scotland, or in the Republic of Switzerland, finds no country that excels Kentucky; and the morning sun rising in the east, and throwing its light over the granite hills of New Hampshire and across the fertile fields, magnificent cities, vast prairies and winding rivers of the great Mississippi Valley, and onward beyond the Rocky Mountains to the shores of the Pacific ocean, beautifies and illumines no State whose measure of liberty, prosperity, and honor is fuller than that of Kentucky, or that furnishes greater or more varied material for a Historical Society.

ADDRESS OF COL. WM. PRESTON JOHNSTON.

The Kentucky Historical Society did the writer a great honor when it invited him to deliver the annual address. He knew that great difficulties intervened—business interests committed to his charge by others; but he hoped so to arrange these as to permit his appearance at Frankfort at this time. The purpose of your Society is so near the heart of every Kentuckian, its business so full of inspiration, that everything seemed possible in its service. It has not, however, been possible for the writer to appear in person, owing to paramount engagements, and he, therefore, avails himself of the services of a friend in the delivery of his address, and throws himself upon the indulgence of this Society.

It is good for Kentucky that this Historical Society has been formed; that her glory in the past is safe in the hands of men sensitive to her honor, yet keenly alive to the demands of inexorable truth. Her deeds and achievements have been great and memorable. We should not willingly let them die, or be forgotten. True it is, that it is better to do great deeds than to record them. But there is no sharper spur to grand endeavor than a confidence that, even if it be made in vain, it will not sink into the dust, but will live in the hearts and memories of men. The unrecorded dead and deeds of a people fade into the infinite spaces of the past like the echo of the winds of a century ago. It is History that confers immortality. The power to achieve lifts a people above the groveling billions who cumber the earth; but it is only to a chosen few of the generous and gifted races of mankind that it is given to write their annals on adamant and embody achievement in literature, and so shine into the far future, even as a star in the firmament, to guide and to glorify. It is the historical literature of a nation which confers upon it perennial life. Its tear-blotted and blood-stained pages bestow the only immortality possible to a nation, as distinguished from an individual.

A memorable history fitly recorded is necessary to the very idea of a historic race; and have you considered how much is implied in that term, a *historic* race? It is to be numbered with the Greeks, in whom all forms of beauty found their standard and incarnation; with the Romans, who dominated the world in the majesty and masterhood of strength and order; with those children of Israel who struck the harp of prophecy and praise to the Lord Most Highest, which will resound till time shall be no more. It is to be counted in that strenuous brotherhood of European nations which directs the material forces and intellectual movement of the whole earth. This is a high destiny

How is our American people to become a historic race; and how is Kentucky to stand in its vanguard? First, there must be aspiration, not only for equality with the very best, but for preëminence. Unless you contend for the first place, you will be found in the last. It is a contest of Titans, into which the feeble, the fearful, and the sluggish need not enter. But you must not only inspire; you must think, and

do, great things. And, lastly, you must add to your aspiration and achievement the inspiration which emblazons thought and action in imperishable forms on the enduring scrolls of literature and history. This Society makes the first step in this last grand consummation—the record of your past.

The question naturally arises, whether there is anything to justify the hope that your place in the march of nations may be in the front rank. Has this little Commonwealth given promise of a really high and grand career? I think it can be demonstrated by an appeal to the facts of history. This State is yet a youthful member of the community of civilized States. Only a few weeks ago I shook hands with the venerable Dr. Graham, walking briskly in the streets of Louisville. And yet his span of years nearly equals the whole existence of the Commonwealth. The century which marks the life time of Kentucky amounts but to a decade in the life-time of a nation You are yet in the bloom of youth; in the beauty and joyousness of your spring-tide What, then, can you have achieved? The infant Hercules strangled two monstrous serpents while yet in the cradle. Your infancy has been Herculean. It is a custom to chronicle the childhood of princes—of babes born in the purple; and the pen of inspiration has deigned to celebrate the youth of those destined for leadership by divine selection. "He chose David also his servant, and took him away from the sheep folds. As he followed the ewes great with young ones, he took him, that he might feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance."

And, oh! fellow-citizens, if ever there was a shepherd with the seal of sovereignty upon his brow, a fair young David among the sheep-folds, a community clothed with the signs and symbols of royalty, it is the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Again, I declare that you who have bound yourselves together in a well-organized and zealous State Historical Society have done well. Your work is a good work. You are the keepers of the tables of the law. You are the registrars and chroniclers of the daily life of the State. You are sentinels to that treasury of thought where lie stored the crown-jewels of her intellectual and moral worth. The glory and honor of your State is in your keeping. The importance of your duty and your trust cannot be overestimated.

It is my wish, in coming before the public, always to add some bit of original thinking, when possible, to our common stock of knowledge. Carrying out this purpose, I shall venture to ask a question appropriate to this audience and occasion, and to attempt its answer. "What is History?" This is a question which has been often asked, and the reply would seem obvious enough. But the great men who have written history—the oracles—make response, not in definitions, but in epigrams. Now, an epigram, no matter how central its aim or trenchant its edge, differs essentially from a definition. The epigram sweeps the horizon with bird's-eye view, and depicts the landscape in a sentence. This is art. The humbler, but not less useful, office of the definition is, with Jacob's-staff and chain, to run the lines and mark the boundaries of knowledge. The wise Socrates taught that definition is the beginning of exact thought. You will, therefore, pardon me my definition, which is submitted to wholesome correction.

Let us first look to the historians for their conception of what history is. You will find that Carlyle calls it "a looking before and after;" Macaulay, "a true picture of the life of our ancestors;" Arnold, "the biography of a Society;" Kingsley says, "history is the history of men and women, and of nothing else;" Sir James Stephens views history "as a drama of which retribution is the law, opinion the chief agent, and the improvement and ultimate happiness of our race the appointed, though remote, catastrophe;" Michelet, in his fine French way, says: "Thierry called history narrative, and M. Guizot, analysis. I have named it resurrection, and it will retain the name." I have no such words as these. They are as vivid as the flash of the electric spark; but they are epigrams, not definitions. Will you now tread with me a lower plane of thought and feeling, in which we may find more of the exactness of the work-day worlds.

History is man's true record of whatever is general, important, and ascertained in the living past of humanity.

It is man's record; and his record of the past of man. History relates to the past by force of the term. Prediction is not history, and what we call the present is already past when it is proclaimed. The striking of the clock announces that the hour is dead. Moreover, it is man's record, not the eternal and infallible register of his acts, which is written in the Book of Doom. Neither is it Nature's record, her autobiography, speaking through the facts which we have grouped under the names of geography, geology, biology, and those kindred sciences which have a close relation to the physical side of man. All these are auxiliary to history; elucidate, illustrate, help to embody it. They furnish the drapery for that spiritual nature of man, of his humanity, which, under God's gift, rules

the upper realm of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof.

History is the record of a *living* past, of those spiritual forces which animated men of other days, and which still sway, however modified, the actors of to-day. Archæology, which is the palæontology of man, collects and classifies the fossil facts of human existence, which retain the forms, but not the breath and sentient being, of life. It deals with what has perished. It strives to reconstruct, through aid of the imagination, that dead past. Hence, though it is not history, it helps it, and is peculiarly within the province of a Historial Society. A flint arrow-head, an Indian mound, prehistoric pottery, all have a meaning for the illuminati: they are the alphabet of the unknown.

And so with paleol gy, or the science of antiquities. If a fact has perished, it belongs to archæology; if it is perishable, to antiquities; but the legacies of history have a perennial bloom.

History must at last define itself by the standard of the permanent, the important, and the general. It is always a series of generalizations. It is by this division that biography is set apart from history, which it aids, illustrates and verifies. Biography is at once the mother and interpreter of history. But there is a life of society apart from the lives of its members, so that we must say with Arnold that "history is the biography of a society."

Its position is central in the circle of human knowledge, because it is the interpretation of man, the central figure of creation. We must discriminate between it and the tangent, intersecting, and included provinces of knowledge. These auxiliary sciences are the handmaidens of the queenly daughter of Memory.

But the most essential criterion of history is its truth. All forms of the unreal, whether fiction or falsification, or fable, must be rejected from the limits of history.

History, as a human record, partakes of the error and fallibility of man's nature; but resting chiefly upon human testimony, and having for a principal purpose the moral guidance of men, its decisions are based upon the preponderance of probabilities.

Still, there are many facts which are certain. To narrate these and their attendant circumstances, and set upon them a moral value, are among the offices of history.

You need not put any faith, my fellow-citizens, in that oft-quoted saying of the cynical Walpole, who himself had faith in nobody. "Do not read history to me," exclaimed the broken-down politician, "I know that that is false." He mistook his own false and faulty pleadings before the bar of history for the final decree of that just and awful tribunal to which the unfortunate righteous cry aloud out of the very depths, and not in vain. Walpole's own place is fixed forever. History has laid her half scornful finger on the reputation and memory of the arch-corrupter, and oh, how different is the shrivelled mummy from the man who filled so wide a space. No, my friends, history is true in the main to those who earnestly seek the truth. If this were not so, if the sifted evidence of the past were not trustworthy in most of its features, the same doubt and denial might be predicated of the veracity of the living, moving, breathing society around us; and Mallock's question, "Is life worth living?" would be already answered, "No." This Association is itself a proof of the vital interest felt in the establishment and perpetuation of truth. That is your aim, your object, your constant endeavor, the very reason for your existence; hence you may feel an honest pride in your agency for good, and in the moral force you exert in bringing forth light out of darkness and establishing the reign of truth among men.

I now turn to a practical question. What is the proper sphere of this Association? The answer is implied in its name. Your Society is intended to rescue, to record, and to transmit the history of Kentucky. In the vastness of modern literary accumulation and scientific research, effective work and valuable results can be attained only by a division of labor. You will accomplish much if you complete your own particular segment in the vast circle of human knowledge. You have much to cheer you on in your exalted and animating task. Its labors will be lightened by the interest of a theme as stirring as the pages of Froissart and as picturesque as the Idyls of Tennyson, and will be sweetened by the rewards of patriotic endeavor. There is no grander romance than Kentucky's century of vivid, strenuous manhood embodies.

If your efforts shall succeed in presenting a resurrected past instinct with the throbbing life of a cycle of yesterdays, no sister State will show a chronicle more individual, or crowded with figures vaster, more titanic, or more potent in politics and war. Look to the beginnings of your history. The voices of its dawn stir the blood like the sound of a bugle. The gathering of the pioneers in our leafy glades rises like a scene from the tales of Chaucer, or a page torn from mediæval romance. They seemed to be moved by that half-barbaric, half-divine spirit of unrest which lays the foundations of empire in the realms of matter and of mind. It was the springtide of our national existence, the hey-day of our youth. The breath of May was in the

flowers and leaves: the sweet sap was flowing in every fibre from tap-root to topmost branch; there was life everywhere. The sound of rural merriment was on the breeze, and the echoes of the chase, or the keener and more thrilling notes of the combat, war-whoop, rifle crack, and the hard breathing of mortal struggle. All is green above, and all is green below, save that one red thread of heart's blood which streaks the verdant carpet, the mark of Indian cruelty and hate.

Life was joyous, intense, and childlike in its simplicity, restlessness, and eager enjoyment. Heroic Greece seems come again as we recall the story of the contest for the soil between a gifted race and their savage foes; and as we behold rising from the bosom of this primitive Commonwealth, twin nurslings, the majestic form of law and the puissant presence of martial achievement.

Common consent, the popular verdict, which is a wiser verdict than the few are always willing to confess, has, after the sifting of a century, assigned the position of the typical pioneer to DANIEL BOONE. Without exaggerating his virtues, or concealing his defects, I believe that this is a just judgment. He is entitled to this preëminence, not merely because he was the first to penetrate to the heart of this goodly land, but because, like Joshua and Caleb, the tidings he bore back to his countrymen were such as to induce them to brave the dangers of the wilderness, and the greater peril of the savage hunters who possessed the land. To enter this debatable ground, the battle-field where met the fierce warriors from the Miami and the braves of the South, was to pass between the upper and nether mill-stone. But the grit of the pioneer was sharper than the burr of the savage. He endured the fearful ordeal, and left to us the heritage of his hardihood and indomitable courage. On the next anniversary—11th February, 1881—you can, if you will, celebrate the third semi-centennial of the birthday of Daniel Boone.

Boone was already well on in middle life, when with five others, in 1769, he crossed the crest of the Cumberland Mountains, and entered Kentucky. In a few months he was the only survivor of the party. Among them perished that Findley, who had explored the defiles of these mountains two years before, and to whose report Boone owed his ardent longing for this adventure. Findley stands to us the shadow of a name; the first explorer, the first expiatory victim, of the invaded sanctity of the wilderness. The life of Daniel Boone is familiar to this audience—his combats with rifle and scalping-knife; his perilous adventures by flood and field; his absolute isolation in the unbroken solitude of the forest; the restless craving of his soul for what was beyond, which bore him on and on, until his bones were laid by the banks of the Missouri.

Did you ever try to conceive over what a compass of country, and with what perils the pioneer made his ceaseless tramp? In this day of steam-power and iron rail, we are whirled hither and thither as whim or business prompts, and it is hard for us to estimate the endless marches and countermarches, which carried the early settlers over unknown and hostile regions. The spirit of migration stirs the blood of men like some potent fever, which will not down. Think of Boone, ever on foot, born in Pennsylvania, a dweller in North Carolina, the explorer of Kentucky. Think of his pilgrimages back and forth; his expeditions against the Indians; his scouting parties; his long hunts. We see him a prisoner at Detroit; waging war in Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and at last, a settler in Missouri. But whether as warrior, hunter, captive or citizen, he bore himself worthily. Patient of fatigue and suffering, circumspect in council, eager in the fray, he knew how, when occasion required, to do and endure all things for the common weal. This is patriotism. Remember his escape from the Indians at Chillicothe to warn our infant colony of the threatened invasion. He saved it. His courage, his endurance, his intelligence saved the little settlement at Boonsborough. This is to be a good citizen, to give all that is in you for the common cause. Therefore, the memory of Daniel Boone deserves well of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

But if it is our duty to perpetuate the name of Boone, as the type of the simple, narrow, aggressive pioneer, there is another of a loftier, broader genius, the chief founder of the imperial splendor of all this broad West, the great Kentuckian of the last century. There is but one man to whom the name can be applied—GEORGE ROGERS CLARK.

You all know how this great man came to Kentucky, a mere youth in years, but already an adept in war, and revolving in his capacious brain schemes of empire for the "Old Dominion" which had given him birth. A land-surveyor by profession, he had already served in the Indian wars, when, in 1775, being then less than twenty-three years of age, he came to Kentucky. He at once obtained command of the Indian fighters of the colony. He initiated the movement for an organized government, and, in the next year, 1776, was sent as a delegate to urge upon the State authorities of Virginia the claims of the colony for

government and defense. Clark was one of those men who are called, by every impulse of their natures, to the work of moulding a crude community into a regular Commonwealth. He was an organizer like Theodoric, like Charlemagne; and, as the chief duty of the hour was the protection of the colony by arms, he converted the guerrilla forays of his countrymen into a system of defense, which, in repelling attack, struck at the very vitals of the assailant. We are too apt, in reflecting on the meagreness of the means employed, to underrate the magnitude of the results and the scope of the genius which foresaw them. It was Clark who conceived the great design of wresting the Northwest from the British Empire. He captured Kaskaskia with but four companies, and compelled the surrender of Vincennes with only 175 men, who had endured the most intolerable hardships to reach it. He transferred the theatre of war from the soil of Kentucky to the territory north of the Ohio, and taught the enemy to fear for their own corn-fields and wigwams. He made peace possible in this smiling land by teaching the rigors of war to a ferocious foeman. His was the far-reaching vision and ample pinion of the eagle.

It was a sad sight, when age and poverty and his infirmities had bowed the old hero down, and he sat wifeless, childless, and crippled at his cabin door, with a new world in which he had no part rising around him. His rude dwelling was on Corn Island, at the Falls of the Ohio, near where the grand railroad bridge spans the plunging rapids. Here he brooded over the neglect which had consigned him to early obscurity. He had given a teeming and imperial territory to his country, and still he had scarcely where to lay his head. At last, the kindness of his sister, Mrs. Croghan, drew him from his solitude, and he had the comforts of a home with her at Locust Grove, six miles above Louisville.

An old aunt of mine, who was on familiar terms, as a child, in that household, has described to me the old man as she saw him in those sad latter days. He was always a friend of her father's, and would summon this little girl to fan away the flies as he slept in his chair. He always rewarded the service with some grave and courteous compliment. He had lost a leg, and, as he sat asleep, with face as white as wax, and his grand, towering forehead corrugated, and bald as Scipio's, there was something very noble and awful in the heroic ruin, even to the eyes of a child.

The untamed freedom of his early life had unfitted him for domestic happiness. A tradition is preserved in his family that he was fascinated with the beauty of the daughter of the Spanish Governor of St. Louis at the time he relieved that post from an Indian attack. But witnessing a want of courage in the Governor, he broke off his addresses to the girl. He said to his friends, "I will not be the father of a race of cowards." There was a vein of fierceness in his nature, which grew upon him as the clouds settled on his life. He resented deeply what he considered the ingratitude of the Republic. Virginia presented him a sword. When the committee brought it to him, he received their compliments at first in gloomy silence, and then exclaimed: "When Virginia needed a sword I gave her one. She sends me now a toy. I want bread!" He thrust the sword into the ground, and broke it with his crutch.

An impression has got out that he was an illiterate man. This is a mistake. It arises from the *verbatim* copy of his journal printed in Cincinnati. But General M. Lewis Clark, his nephew, tells me that he had it from his father Governor William Clark, that the manuscript of this journal was in his handwriting, and was written by him, at dictation, as his brother's amanuensis, when he was a mere boy. It proves nothing as to George Rogers Clark's clerkly skill.

His grave is marked by a little headstone, marked G. R. C. Not half a dozen people in America can point it out. It is in Cave Hill cemetery, at Louisville. Pilgrimages have been made to the tombs of smaller men; tall monuments have risen at the public behest to people who were puppets beside this great, neglected man. But above the gloom of his declining years, above the forgetfulness which has obscured his memory, will yet shine forth the glory of George Rogers Clark, the chief founder of this Commonwealth, and of all the States of the Northwest. Are republics ungrateful? Is it only for living and prosperous soldiers, who may have future favors to bestow, that popular honors are reserved? It is not George Rogers Clark who is dishonored by the obscurity of his neglected grave. I do not believe that the people of Kentucky, and of the Northwest, who have the right to share in a tribute to his exalted merit, will long suffer their hero to remain uncommemorated.

During the period of its infancy, this Commonwealth was certainly no spoiled child of fortune. The brave hearts and strong arms of her sons were the only guardians of her frontiers. When the feeble colony appealed to the mother State of Virginia in 1776 for powder, the appeal was in vain, until Clark exclaimed, "A country which is not worth defending is not worth claiming." The population of

this country is growing accustomed to run to the General Government for aid on every occasion, ordinary or extraordinary. It was not so in earlier times. Indeed, the interests of the States were so localized, and the Federal tie so slight, that these remote settlements made their way under a stress of adverse legislation and unfriendly treatment that greatly alienated them from the Atlantic States. Kentucky was not admitted as a State of the Union until after eight conventions had been held by her people to attain that end. The North-eastern States showed themselves especially selfish in their treatment of the trans-Alleghany settlements. For the sake of some commercial advantages to themselves, they were willing to trade off to Spain the right to the free navigation of the Mississippi river by the inland States. With no outlet to her products, Kentucky would have been left isolated in a desert. Thus hemmed in by mountains, by hostile tribes, and by unjust treaty regulations, the infant republics of the West would have been blighted at their birth. Happily, the good sense and justice of Virginia succeeded in preventing this iniquity. But the attempt certainly fostered projects of independence and secession in Kentucky, as any enormous sectional injustice is sure to do. The fear of this, and of centralized oppression, left its stamp upon the politics of the State, and to it we owe the Resolutions of 1798-'9, and the firm resistance of Kentucky to the Federal party.

After the epoch of settlement and border warfare, of constitutions and the beginnings of government, came a long era in which a majestic structure of municipal and constitutional law rose upon those rude foundations, and absorbed the intellectual energies and civic passions of a whole people. The peculiar condition of the land law and of criminal law in this State gave to its litigation a subtlety, a logical precision, and an opportunity for oratorical effort that have rarely been excelled in any country. The forum became the battle-field. The age of orators and of great lawyers had come, and we behold all the enthusiasm of an ardent race, selecting for its political chiefs the most eloquent of its sons. In a host, who swayed the multitude by the graces or skill of public speech, it is not invidious to name that one who, for so many years enchained the hearts and imaginations of the whole country, Henry Clay. This is not the occasion for a eulogy upon this great party leader; but, while he represented Kentucky, her voice, her influence, and her fame were not excelled by older and more populous States. Whenever parties were marshaled to decide questions of national importance, a vast body of the American people awaited in respectful silence the mandate of that imperious chief to whom they had given their absolute confidence and their hearts.

If Clay was the Achilles of the forum, the young and gifted citizen who succeeded to his honors and his power, was the Ulysses of American statesmanship. John C. Breckinridge was a man whose stately form and winning presence still lingers in the memory of most of those here present. He was the friend of so many of us that neither am I prepared to speak, nor you to hear, a discussion of the man and his deeds, with that calm and judicial frame of mind which he himself would have brought to the scrutiny. Brave, patient benevolent, sagacious, wise, he sought the distinction accorded to Aristides—the Just. He used no machinery of party, but trusted to the soundness of his views, his eloquence, his courage, and his personal graces, which led men captive. An orator, a statesman, a gentleman of knightliest type, these gifts did not complete the round of a character singularly endowed. Breckinridge had many of the qualities of a great soldier. He rendered much excellent service, and performed some splendid achievements. His career was coincident with the epoch which has just passed away. He died young. His whole public career was spanned by twenty years; but he will stand as a fine figure in American history, of which any Kentuckian may be proud.

In the rapid sketches of a few great and typical Kentuckians, which I have thus presented to you, I have only opened the way for more skillful artists to complete a magnificent picture gallery of eminent and worthy sons of our State. Let us hope that this work may be done with the genius which everywhere abounds among her children, and with that patient industry which is the servant of a resolute will. The service thus rendered is an act of patriotism, and he who performs it well deserves the gratitude of his fellow-citizens. The Historical Society, in initiating this duty, may properly be accounted a public benefactor.

Memorial of the Kentucky Historical Society to the General Assembly.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

Your petitioners would respectfully represent, that they have been appointed by some of the most distinguished citizens of our State to ask of your honorable body a charter (which is hereby submitted) for a "Historical Society" of this Commonwealth.

History has been said to be "Philosophy teaching by examples"—"the sum of all human events"—and the narration and perpetuation of the same. Everything that concerns the mind and consciousness of mankind is the object of History. It is, therefore, the nucleus of all the sciences, all the arts, and all thought. The narration of the events of a single life is Biography—of a State, nation, or all mankind, is History. So History itself sets forth man's destiny and the best methods of his "life, liberty, and happiness." The life of a man is short, but infinite is the time that follows. History is not only an aspiration for earthly immortality, but is the basis of the wisest conduct of human affairs. All nations have felt these truths. We have the mounds, the stone hatchets, crockery, &c., of the rudest savages, passing on through all grades of progress till we meet the pyramids of Egypt, the oldest known center of man's highest development. Then we have ruins, temples, inscriptions, fossils, mummies, coins, medals, statues, paintings, annals, chronicles, languages, and all that. These are the materials of History.

Kentucky is the first-born of the old thirteen States. None is richer in heroic deeds, romantic adventures, and patriotic aspirations. Of all the earth, we are among the first in the natural elements for the evolution of the highest animal life. We have no Historical Society. Much has been lost forever for want of records, by neglect, and the lack of co-operation; many objects of value have passed into the hands of the Historical Societies of other States. In vain will you enact laws for the encouragement of manufactures, mines, agriculture, and the highways of commerce; if History is neglected, you cannot reach the highest civilization.

We need not go to foreign nations for encouragement. All the most enterprising States of the Union have established Historical Societies; have given liberal sums out of the Treasury of the Commonwealth, and annual appropriations—Wisconsin, our junior, leading the way with an annual grant of five thousand dollars. We therefore beg your honorable body to legalize our charter; to give us a fire-proof room or building to preserve all that is worth saving, and to grant us an annual sum of $ to pay officers, to print our records and transactions for exchange with other Societies, and for the public use, and thus do our part for the advancement of the State, the nation, and mankind.

C. M. CLAY, *Chairman*,
J. B. McCREARY,
GREEN CLAY SMITH,
J. W. DODD,
G. W. RANCK,
L. E. HARVIE,
THOMAS SCOTT,
J. K. PATTERSON,
H. T. STANTON,
JOHN WATTS KEARNEY,
C. E. BOWMAN,
CHARLES ANDERSON,
J. H. LEWIS,
Committee.

REMARKS OF GEN. C. M. CLAY.

Citizens, never shall we believe, till experience shall disprove our hope, that the Representatives of our gallant State will refuse our petition. We have seen most liberal sums granted in perpetuation of the memory of some of Kentucky's honored sons. Will they refuse to all her children, of all times and all parties, a tithe of what she has so generously bestowed upon a few? Man lives not upon bread only—the mind, the sentiments, as well as the body, must be fed, or else we perish. It was the record of the heroes of Greece and of Rome in annals and song, and eloquent portrayals, which were the banners and the battle cries that led them on to victory and the supremacy of the world. Not all the statues, the mausoleums, the Pantheons, and the Alhambras, have so fired the patriotic souls of all succeeding generations as the sublime and immortal words, "Go tell it at Lacedæmon that we died here in obedience to her laws." Over all the earth, in all the seas of time, lie the sad wrecks of human hopes—of "life, liberty, and happiness." History alone remains—the light is not extinguished: it is on the altars of the fire-worshipers only that this inextinguishable flame burns on forever! Let us, Kentuckians, gather up all our forces for the future. It is the spirit of a people which constitutes its victorious power; whilst that lives, a nation can never die!

CHAPTER 244.

AN ACT to incorporate the Kentucky Historical Society.

§ 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky*, That C. C. Graham, J. Stoddard Johnston, Green Clay Smith, James B. McCreary, James K. Patterson, Cassius M. Clay, John. R Procter, Bennett H. Young, E. D. Sayre, George W. Ranck, Richard H. Collins, John B. Houston, Euclid L. Johnson, J W. Dodd, W. C. P. Breckinridge, J M. Wright. Lewis E Harvie, Dr. Robert Peter, J. O. Harrison, William M. Beckner, T. D. Marcum, J. Aug. Williams, D. Howard Smith, Bedford Leslie, H. T. Stanton, G. R. Keller, D. C Buell, Charles Anderson, William Preston, Thomas Bradley, James Speed, T L Jones, Luke P. Blackburn. Clinton McClarty, Isaac T Woodson, Lucius Desha, jr, Van B. Young, John Andrew Steele, Attila Cox, Grant Green, W P. D. Bush, T. M Turner, J Q. A. Stewart, A. W Overton, F B Huston, T C. H. Vance, D. C. Barrett, and their associates and successors, be, and are hereby constituted, a body-politic and corporate, by the name of the "Kentucky Historical Society;" and by that name shall have perpetual succession, may sue and be sued, implead and be impleaded, defend and be defended, and have all the faculties and liabilities of a corporation.

§ 2. That the object of said Society shall be to collect, preserve, and make known materials and memories relating to the history of Kentucky; to diffuse information concerning the State's resources and advantages; to aid in her development and progress, and to help in every way to increase the sum of human knowledge

§ 3. That said Society may have and use, and, at its discretion, change a common seal; may ordain and enforce a constitution and by-laws, rules and regulations, and elect a President, two Vice Presidents, a Curator, Recording Secretary and Treasurer, Librarian, and Executive Committee, and such other officers as said constitution or by-laws may prescribe: *Provided*, Said constitution, by-laws, rules and regulations, are not inconsistent with the Constitution and laws of the State, nor of the United States.

§ 4 The said Society shall be located at the Capital of Kentucky; a majority of the members of its Executive Committee shall reside at the same; its annual meetings shall be held at the same, and also as many other meetings of the Society as its members may think proper.

§ 5 That said Society may receive and hold, by donation or devise, real or personal property to any extent, and may, by gift, purchase, or otherwise, hold books, papers, documents, historical memorials, and other articles suited to promote its objects and usefulness; but all of said property shall be held in trust for the State of Kentucky, and shall be exempt from all State, county, and municipal taxation.

§ 6. That the entire collection of books, papers, documents, memorials, and other articles of said Society, shall be deposited and kept at the Capital of Kentucky, and no part of said collection, except duplicate articles, shall be sold or removed from said Capital without the consent of the Legislature of Kentucky.

§ 7. That the two rooms over the Auditor's office, in the third story of the building in Frankfort known as the "Fire-proof Offices," are hereby set apart and dedicated to the use of said Society; but if, from any cause, there should be a dissolution of said Society, then all the property and collections of the Society in said rooms shall be taken possession of by the Governor of Kentucky for the State of Kentucky.

§ 8. That the Governor shall assign to said Society for safe-keeping such parts of the State archives, and such articles of interest belonging to the State, as he may think calculated to promote the objects of said Society; but said archives and articles shall be held in trust for the State, and shall be subject to the order of the Governor.

§ 9. This act shall take effect from its passage

Approved February 19, 1880.

N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA

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